

April 20, 1966

Mr. Clyde Arbuckle  
San Jose,  
California

Dear Sir:

Enclosed you will find letters from my grandfather, John Smitherum to my grandmother. She was left in Hazel Green with six small boys. My grandfather was killed in an accident near Murphy's after his last letter. We do not know any more than that and as I came into this real late, all sources of information have passed away.

The letters are copied just the way they were written. I have all the originals except two.

I have added a little note on the history of the Smitherums.

Yours truly,

Edgar Smitherum

3525 Winkle Avenue  
Santa Cruz,  
California 95060

JOHN SMITHERAM

Born 1787, Crowan, Cornwall

father of

JOHN (SMITHRAM) SMITHERUM

who wrote these letters

Born St. Breage, Cornwall, 1816.

When he and wife came to this country I do not know, but they settled in Hazel Green, Wisconsin. He had two sisters and one brother; Mary and Amelia, and James. Six sons, John, Thomas, James, William Henry, Samuel, and Joseph. William Henry was a resident of San Jose for over fifty years, coming here from Johnsville, Plumas County about 1895 or 6. Sara Harrison and Edgar Smitherum were born in Johnsville - now a State park - and received their schooling in San Jose.

New York Sept. 20th 1852

Dear Wife

I have again taken the opportunity to write you this letter we are still in the city of New York arrived here on Tuesday last and are going to leave today we are going in a Steam Ship called the Northern light. Have paid 150 dollars a piece for our passage to Sanfrancisco on the Vanderbilt line. Nicaragua route. We sent a letter to Ursilla a few days ago. We are both very well and in good spirits. I have not been better for a long time than I have been since we left home. John Goldsworthy is very well give his love to his family. We was to the Methodist Church and heard preaching three times yesterday. We have not seen any one that we know since we left home except Ursilla's brother. Have not seen an English man that we know of. There is a great many here bound to California but the ships is not throunged. It is now moast 12 oclock the ship will sail at 3 oclock we have some things yet to do so I must conclude with my best wishes toward you all. No more from your affectionate husband.

John Smithram

Sonora January 23, 1853

Dear Wife

After arriving at the place of our destination or nearly so as I do expect I now sit down to write you this letter to let you know that we are both well. I think that I am much better now than when I left home. I feel quite well am 8 or 10 pounds heavier than when I left they tell me that I look quite well but the cough still hangs on but not near so bad as when I was at home John Goldsworthy is very well he now send a letter to his Wife with this we wrote you a letter each when on the isthmus but we understood that the mail was just gone by and them letters would not be sent on before the next mail did arrive we arrived at Sanfrancisco Jan 16th 13 days after leaving the isthmus the Ship on the Pacific was badly crowded had the passengers from the one we sailed in from New York and the passengers from a Ship that sailed from New Orleans in all about 300 Stearige passengers only 84 berths to lye in the rest had to lye where they could find a place so much as 150 had to lye on the top deck without any covering except our blanket I lyed there 6 or 7 nights myself and sometimes when it was very cold When we arrived at Sanfrancisco we heard very bad accounts from the mines It have been more rain here this winter than it have been before for several years which made the roads so bad that the teams could not bring up privisons in some places vituals culd not be had for money part of the way from Sanfrancisco to Sonora about 70 miles of it we walked on foot teamsters have from 30 to 37½ cents per pound for hauling flour and other provissions that distance on

that road the asked of John Goldsworthy 10 dollars to car that little box that he brought from home we walked 65 miles in 3 days Sleeped one night in a tent on the bare ground without so much as a board to lye on the next night on the floor on this tramp we had to pay from one dollar to one dollar and quarter and one dollar and half per meal. I now write this letter in James Glassons Cabbin have seen Joseph Rogers Thomas Edwards Wm Oatey and several others I expect we shall go out in the Country to morrow and see several more of our neibours Jenkin R. Goldsworthy. H. Reynolds and several others is gone north before we arived I expect we shall see John Trgloan to morrow he received four letters last week R. Wymons J. Williams H. Williams and all the rest that we have seen or heard from is very well I saw Joseph Allen yester day at Sonora he is very well and desired to be remembered to his wife you may leave word to that effect at Hazel Green I have not much money left to send home now but I will try to get a little to send next mail I think I can have some a man told me yesterday that I could have what I wanted of him the place looks dull at present I have not wished myself home since I left neither do I expect that I shall if my helth keep good as it is now I must conclude so no more at present from your affectionate Husbant

When you write me direct

Mr. John Smithram  
Sonora  
Tuolumme County  
California

John Goldsworthy send a letter now at the same time

Tuttle Town Feb. 7th 1853

Dear Wife

I this evening take the priveledge to write you this letter hoping it will find you in good helth. I stated on my last letter that we landed at Sanfrancisco on the 10th day of last month and came to Sonora on the 23rd. The first one that I saw that I knowed since our leaving home was John Vivians wife in Sonora. We stopped two days with James Glafson and party at his cabbin on Monday we went to Jacksons flats. Saw Rd. Symons, Nickolas Williams, John William and Rd. Clemence. Stopped with them one day. Rd. Symons went with us to show us the diggins. The all behaved first rate to us We next went to Carsons saw John Tregloan, Henry Meager, Ed. Rogers, Wm. Oatey and party stopped with them 1½ days William Oatey went with us to show us the diggins. Saw Francis Harris and several others that we knowed saw Steven and Thomas Hill The have a plenty of money. Talks about going to England this spring The talks some about going back to Sidney again great talks here about Austrilla Several leaving here for that country. After 5 or 6 days walking about we finilly settled at a place called Tuttle Town less than a half mile from Rd. Symons & C. cabbin 4 or 5 miles from Sonora. Richard Goldsworthy, Wm. Jenkin, Hry. Roynald and several others was gone to the North mines before we came so John Goldsworthy have not seen Richard he have sent three letters to him and now waits for an answer we live and work with Thomas Edwards from Bull Branch and Edward Bate from Vinegar Hill 4 in company we commenced to work on old diggins. I think we can make wages the men about here are moast all getting 4 or 5 dollars per day and we hope to do the same. Flour is worth 35 dollars

per hundred pounds, beef 36 cents per pound Butter 1 dollar per pound potatoes 25 cents per pound and other things in proportion. I now send you this Draft for Sixty (60) dollars expecting it will come in an acceptable time and hope to be able to send you some more again this is done I have found since I have being here that the chances to get money is full so good as I expected altho much less now than the was 2 or 3 years ago. I saw a piece of gold that was dug out of the ground yesterday it weighed over 7 ounces. I have been tolerably well even since we left home much better than before. If I could keep so well as I am now I can get on very well for helth part. Alto the cough still trouble me some but not near so bad as when at home and I have now a hope that I shall again get clear of it. Our two partners is first rate cooks. The can bake bread and fry pancakes like everything. Goldsworthy chops the wood and I can the water and tends the cooks I washed last night and Goldsworthy is washing tonight gets on first rate fine wether here now about the same as home in the middle May the grafs is growing and the trees are putting forth their leaves. As a general thing the country is very mountainous where the mines are if you see Robert tell him I will send him a letter very soon.

John Goldsworthy is very well and give his love to his family he intends to send a letter next mail he was greatly disapointed in not finding Richard here.

I want for you to send me an answer to this letter without any delay as soon as you have changed the money I will send a letter again next mail if all is well let me know how all the boys is getting on and who is learning to need the pasties and who is district clerk now. I still have the parcels that was sent for Wm. Jenkin and Henry

Reynolds. I don't know where they are I have delivered the rest and want to know what to do with them. I sent a letter last mail which I expect you have received before this will come to hand. All of our neighbours that I have seen is very well and doing very well. Joe Rogers and Wm. Oatey looks just as usual. John Tregloan and Henry Meager is first rate looks well. James Glafson, Rd. Symons, Nls. Williams, John Williams is first rate. Rd. Clemence is well. Remember me to Sister Mary and family and to Uncle John Gray, Rd. Thomas, Jinefor Ursilla and Mary Tregloan and every body else. If Jenkin think the same of the contry as I do he would have Williamhenry out here so soon as he could. I wish that our William and Henry was out here but as I am so far behind I could not do any thing for them now. I suppose that if we had heard so much about Austrilla before we left New York as we have since we might have gone there. I must conclude May God bless you all no more at present from your affectionate husband.

John Smithram



Jacksons flatts March 10th 1853

Dear Wife

I now take the priveledge to write you this letter hoping it will find you in good helth as it leaves me at present, for which I feel thankfull to the Almighty for his goodness toward me. I still continue just the same in helth as I have been ever since I came to this country. I feel tolerably well have had no pain nor sickness since I left home neither do I feel that weakness that I use to feel am able to work tolerably well belongs working with Thomas Edward, Edward Bate and Richard Clemence. Richard Symons, John & Nickolas Williams and Peter Oatey left here for home on the third of March. I expect they will be home so soon as this letter if all is well. I gave Richard Symons some money to buy some knives for the boys. I expect they will be glad to have them. I am going to send a letter to Robert Frazer this maill. I sent sixty dollars to you four weeks ago. I expect you will receive it before this come to hand. I sent the second drafft last maill if you have changed one, the other is of no account. I want to have some letters from home now to know how you are getting a long. Be sure to send to me so quick as you can and let me have all the news that you have got. I like to be here very well. Just the same as I expected before I left home gets on first rate nothing wanting but more gold. Have a good living a plenty of shank broth and corran dumplins, good bread, and strong tea, molasses and salt pork. So much as I want anyhow. John Goldsworthy bought a diggins near Sonora is working there. We are working on Jacksons flatts 4 or 5 miles from Sonora. have done slight but hope to do better for the time to come. Will try to send you some more money in three months from the time I sent the last expect I shall be able to do it give my best respects to

Sister Mary and family, Mr. Gray, Rd. Thomas and everybody else.  
John Goldsworthy had a letter from Richard he is at the north mines  
expect him down here very soon. All the neighbours is very well  
and moast generally doing very well. I must conclude with my best  
respects and well wishes toward you and all the enquiring friends.  
No more at present from your affectionate Husband and father

John Smithram

Jacksons flatts March 20th 1853

Dear Wife

I again take the priveledge to write you this letter hoping it will find you all in good helth as it leaves me at present. I still feel tolorablely well for which I feel thanks to the Allmighty for his goodness toward me. I think that I have had a little more cough this last week or two than before but have not been sick any since I left home. Am very well able to work if I can keep so well as I am now. I can get on very well. We have had some cold wet wither lately but expect it will be over soon. I still hope that I shall get clear of this cough after the dry wither gets fairly settled in. I have wrote to you every mail since I have been here and at every opportunity since I left home. So by this time I am anxiously wanting a letter from you. I often think about you and the Dear little boys and hope that we shall meet again. I like to be here just so well as I thought I should. The only thing that makes me uneasy is by being seperated from my family. I work with Thomas Edwards, Edward Bate and Rd. Clemence. John Goldsworthy is working near Sonora he have bought a diggins there I have not seen him for 2 or 3 weeks but I heard that he had a letter from home last week and I was glad to hear that you was all well John Goldsworthy have sent north for Richard to come down here expect him now every day we suppose Crifsy will come with him. I have not got much yet since I have been here though we got about 4 Dollars per day for the first 3 or 4 weeks it cost us the greatest part of that to pay for our tools and board which came out very costly. Since then we have bought a diggins I suppose a hard bargen. Moast all that I know here are doing very well or have done so and I expect my turn will come some time. Rd. Symons, John and Nickolas Williams and Peter Oatey left here for home 2 weeks ago. I sent some money with them to buy some knives for the boys. I expect the have them before this come to hand. I sent

60 dollars to you 6 or 7 weeks ago. I write many things here that is on the last letters no knowing wither you received them or not. Give my love to Sister Mary and family and all enquiring friends. No more for the present from your affectionate husband and father.

John Smithram

Dear Wife,

I wrought the first part of this letter last Sunday and it is now Satterday night again. I have felt very slight all this week but am a little better now. Last Monday I felt bad pain in my breast did not work on Monday afternoon have worked every day since and if I feel no worse shall be able to keep on to work, I think.

Christopher Clemence and Rd. Goldsworthy is come down here from the north mines. Crissy is working with us in Dicks place. John and Richard Goldsworthy is working near Sonora. The are very well Crissy is very well desired to be remembered to his family. I saw John Tregloan today he is very well and gives his love to his family. Thomas Edwards desired to be remembered to his family and gives his loves to his wife if she is not gone. So I must conclude with my best respects and kind love to you all.

John Smithram

Jacksons flats April 22nd 1853

Dear Wife

After the toils and brussels of another day I again take the priveledge to write you this letter to let you know how I am getting on. I feel much better than I did when I wrote the last letter. I am just so well now as I have been any time since I left home if I continue so well as I am at present I can get on very well. I felt much out of order for two or three weeks but worked all the time Except one half a day. I had pain in my breast and another half a day it was raining the rest of my partners went out to work and I stopped at home. I have not got much yet have made wages for the last few days. We bought a diggins had a hard bargin but have paid for it now we are four of us in company Crissy, Thomas Edwards, Ed Bate and myself. We gets on very comfortable together live first rate had a corran cake to night for supper. Crissy and Bate is the cooks Tom and me cut the wood and can the water. Our house is built with logs and covered with Damistick it keeps tolorable and dry and about warm enough. We have a bed each I have five blankets and a good mattress. Crissy washed my two shirts a few days ago and mended my red shirt and drawers. I wear my red shirt and flanel tick pants and drawers to work in and wear my coat in the moarning and evenings. My blue drilling shirt is still in my bag, my socks is getting poor, can get new ones here for six bits a pair. I am expecting a letter from you this mail and should be very glad to have one. I intend to send you fifty dollars in two weeks from this time. I expect you had the last I sent before this time. I saw John Tregloan on Monday last he is well and gives his respects to you. Crissy and Thomas Edwards is now writing a letter each at the same tabel with us. I have not seen Goldsworthy's for the last two weeks. I think the are very well give my love to Sister Mary and family and except a portion of the same for yourself. I must conclude with my

best respects and well wishes toward you all. May God bless you all and if we never meet again on earth may it be our happy lot to meet in heaven.

No more at present from your affectionate husband and father

John Smithram

Jackson flatts May 6th 1853

Dear Wife

I this evening divote a portion of my time to write you this letter hoping it will find you all in good helth as it leaves me. At present thank God for it I feel quite well at present so well or better than I have felt since I left home very little cough at present. I hope it will leave me overawhile I am able to work tolorable well don't feel any of that weaknefs that I did when at home after working. It is now friday evening five months since I left home have had no letter yet heard last Sunday from John Tregloan's letters that you was all well was very glad to hear from you and to know that you was well but am anxiously looking for a letter from you. I am going to send fifty Dollars to you in this letter. I sent Sixty Dollars to you about three month back would be glad to hear that you had received it. So soon as you receive this letter with the money let me know it at once had fine weather all this week. Last Friday it was rain moast all the day so that we did not work. We have got wages for the last three or four weeks. This hundred and ten dollars that I have sent you was my own. Crissy is very well and give his love to his wife and family. He sent a letter to his wife last mail and is going to send another next mail. Crissy is cook, Tom Edwards cut the wood Bate makes the bread. I can the water gets on first rate like to be here very well but hope to see you again some day. Tom Edwards is very well and desired to be remembered to his wife.

Give my best respects to Sister Mary and family. John Gray, Rd. Thomas, Mrs. Tregloan Jinefor Ursilla and all enquiring friends. I have sent a letter every mail since I have been here. I intend to send one again next mail but not so often afterwards for fear that I should tire you going to the post office so often.

I must conclude with my best respects and well wishes towards you all let me know what is the best news with all the boys. No more at presents. from your ever affectionate husband.

John Smithram



Jacksons flatts, May 20th 1853

Dear Wife

I again devote a portion of my time to write you this letter hoping it will find you in good helth as it leaves me at present. I received your letter Dated March 16th last Sunday week. I was very glad to receive it it was the first that I have had since I have been here, but when I read it and saw that you was so much trobled in mind, it did not make me feel much better. But I still hope that every letter will bring me better news. I have felt very well lately I think that I am gradgealy getting a better. Hope to get well again have not much cough now am able to work hard every day get on very well feel my breath a little short when I force myself to work or travel hard. I sent a letter and fifty dollars to you last mail which I expect you will receive before this come to hand. I want to know how you are getting on for money. I want for you to have enough. I think it is best for you to get in your winter's stack of wood this summer. I will send you money to pay for it. Let me know how much you want when you answer this letter. I want to save all the money that I can for to pay Robert. I have been doing very well lately getting good wages we are still the same party living and working together or T. Edwards is working in another claim but we are all partners still you said that you did not receive the letter that I sent from the Ismuth. I wrote one for each of us when at San Juan. Praps it was mist we left New York on the 6th of December on board the steam ship Northern light. I was a little sea sick at first but was able to take my meals reagular at the table after the first day. Goldsworthy was a little sich all the way to the Ismuth. On the night of the fourth day after we left New York being then three hundred miles off from the nearest land our ship took fire about eleven O'clock

at night the sailors ran through the ship between decks saying the ship is on fire all hands on deck. My berth being close by the gangway save it was greatly throunged I did not hurry but very quickly the ship was filled with smoke. I then got on deck so quick as I could. Goldsworthy saw the fire before he turned out. it scared him some but by the exertion of the officers and their assistants the fire was soon extinguished to the joy and satisfaction of all on board. We arrived at the Ismuth in nine days after leaving New York distance twenty-two hundred miles. We was three days crossing the Ismuth went up a river in a steam boat the greatest part of the way and thence across the late Nicogaria. The last twelve miles we rode on mules got on first rate did not see any more difficulty in traveling there than any where elce Tolorable hot the water in the river very good to drink. Stoped at San Juan two days paid two dollars and half per day each for our board.

I want to know what progress you have made in gardening wither you have planted a pleanty of pease and water mellons for the boys or not. Let me know which is the best boy of them and what is the best news with them all and how Jim is getting on wither he is still in the cat and dog class or not. and how old tiger is grown. I think it would be best for you to sell some of the cattle and not be trobled with so much of them but you may please yourself. You know best what to do with them. I expect that I shall not send any letter for four or six weeks. I dont see the need of sending so often as I have nothing particular to write. I suppose you think my letters now rather dry but you know it is my manner of writing my affections for you is so great as ever. I often anticipate the happy day when we shall meet again if not on earth in heaven, I hope. I suppose

Tomas Edwards or Crissy or me shall be writing a letter moast every two weeks Crissy is now writing a letter he is very well Tom Edwards is very well and gives his love to his wife. I expect a letter to-morrow or next day. I want an answer from the first money that I sent. I give my love to Sister Mary and family, to Mr. John Gray Richard Thomas, Mrs. Tregloan, Jinefor Ursilla, and all enquiring friends. No more at present from your ever affectionate husband adue for the present may God bless you all

good night I am your lover

John Smithram

Jacksons flatts June 18th 1853

Dear Wife

I this evening take the opportunity to write you these few lines hoping the will find you in good helth. I received a letter from you two weeks ago and was glad to have it and to know that you are better. I have felt rather slight for this last week have worked every day but one but felt very feeble the weather is very hot I have had but two letters from you yet was glad that you received the draft I must conclude May God Bless you all no more from your affectionate husband

John Smithram

I send a letter next mail

Murphy's Camp July 10th 1853

Dear Wife,

It is now Sunday afternoon. I have no other time to write. I hope this letter will find you in good health. I am now tolerable well but not first rate but still I feel thankful to the Almighty that I am so well as I am. I have been very slight lately but am better at present. Crissy, Tom Edwards, and C. left me about three weeks ago I have not heard from them for the last two weeks. Our diggins at Jacksons flats got poor. Crissy and the rest concluded to hunt for a diggins some other place. I not feeling very well, thought I would rest a few days. I went to woods near Sonora where John Tregloan and the Goldsworthys was and stopped there nearly two week during which I did some little jobs of carpenter work at a boarding house just to clear my board. Crissy and the rest bought some diggins at a place called Valaceda. Several days after they left I came back to Jacksons flats worked and lived by myself for three days did not get much. So I soon got tired of living by myself in such a place as that. I went to Sonora again. While I was absent from Sonora John Tregloan fell in with some men that wanted a horse pump put up at Murphys camp. He under took to do the job for so much money. He now hires me to help him do the work gives me six dollars per day. I have been here but four days I shall finish my job here in a week or eight days more and what I shall be at or where I shall go after that I cannot tell yet. I pay ten dollars per week for my board have a living good enough. Murphy's is about 12 or 15 miles from Sonora is 3 or 4 times so large as Hazel Green. You must still direct my letters to Sonora. I have not had but two letters yet have been expecting one for several weeks. John Tregloan is very well and give his love to his family. He is gone to Sonora today. I saw the Goldsworthys last Monday. They was very

well then and Richard received a letter from his wife. The weather have been very hot here for several weeks. the sun shining bright all day long, not a cloud do appear from moorning to night. Sometimes there is a little breeze of wind which is very exceptable. I intend to send a letter to you again in 2 or 3 weeks from this time if I get settled at any place. John Tregloan have a share in a diggins here. I may work that for him for what I owe - - - - -

(REST OF LETTER MISSING)

Sonora July 24th 1853

Dear Wife

I again today take the opportunity to write you a letter hoping it will find you in good health as it leaves me at present. thank God for it. I received your letter yesterday dated June 5th. I was very glad to receive it and to hear that you was all well. I had been looking for a letter from you for a long time. I have only received two since I have been in the country before that one yesterday. Them was the first two you sent. I sent a letter to you two weeks ago. I was then at Murphy's Camp 12 or 15 miles from here. four or five weeks ago our diggings at Jacksons flats got poor. Crissy, Tom Edwards and Sam Vincent which was then my partners (Bate having sold out) they thought it best to hunt for another place to work and finally settled at Valaceda. I went to woods near Sonora and stopped there with Goldsworthy, Tregloan and party for several days. I then went to Murphys with John Tregloan to fix a pump worked with him ten days then finished the job. I came to Sonora last Sunday. I worked one day last week at 5 dollars per day. two days and half at twelve dollars per day fixing a pump for a man and two days at six dollars per day in all 47 dollars. I commenced to work for wages on a claim in the City of Sonora for six dollars per day on Friday last. I have to attend to the pump to keep the water out and if it want any thing done to it I have to do it. John Tregloan got this place for me, he being acquainted with the owners he have behaved first rate to me since I have been here. John is now at Murphys doing first rate. I received a letter from him yesterday he is very well I took four letters from the post office for him yesterday and furthered them on to him. John and Richard Goldsworthy is all very well. I saw Cristopher Clemeur today he came in from Valaceda yesterday he is

very well but greatly disapointed because he have not had any letters he have not had any since he have been in the Southern mines he told me to say for you to tell Ann not to neglect him so for he is very anxious to know how they are getting on he have sent four or five letters since he have been here. Thomas Edwards was here just now he gives his love to his wife. I now board with John Vivian in Sonora pay nine dollars per week. I expect that Crissy or Dick Clemence will go to work in the same claim with me for wages next week. The weather is very hot have not been any rain for a long time. One man stabbed another here last week it killed him. The general wages for laborers here is 4 dollars per day those that have claims of their own moastly do better. Tho here is many places at this season of the year that they cannot work for want to water. I have now two hundred and fifty or sixty dollars toward paying Robert. I hope to be able to pay him all again the year is up if things turn up as they look now and I continue to be in good helth I shall be able to pay him again then. I sent you fifty dollars some time ago be sure allways to answer the letters that is money in so soon as you receive them. Give my love to Sister Mary and family to Jinefor Ursilla, Mrs. Tregloan, Phillippa Rodda, Rd. Thomas, Mr. Gray and all enquiring friends. I now conclude with my love to you and all the children and when I come home I will bring home some pritty things for them. No more at present from your affectionate husband.

John Smithram



Sonora August 7th 1853

Dear Wife

I now again sit down to write you this letter hoping it will find you in good health as it leaves me at present. I have felt very well lately. I sent a letter to you last mail and one the mail before I am still working at Sonora, have six dollars per day and boarding with John Vivian am getting on tolerable well John Tregloan is still at Murphys getting on first rate. He is putting up pumps. Crissy is at Jacksonsflatts again. Tho. Edwards is at Murphys bought a claim there. John & Rd. Goldsworthy is still at Woods Creek the are all very well. I saw Crissy today after writing the above he is going to work at Woods Creek with his Brother & e. He desired to be remembered to his family he is very well and anxiously looking for a letter he have not had either one since he have been in the southern mines. I feel about so well now as I have any time since I have been in this country. Wages for common hands is four dollars per day those who have been brought up miners generally have five dollars per day when working in deep diggins. The diggins that I work in is poor. How long the will keep us to work there I dont know. I suppose not long without it pays better. I like to live here very well boarding comes out rather expensive. Pay nine dollars per week but have a first rate living. I think it will fit me better than batching while I have six dollars per day. I hear that Henery and Samuel Gray is gone home. I suppose you have no money to pay Henry any interest. I think it will not matter anything. I have the second draff here of the same. I received the answer from the first money. Let me know how all the boys are and wither Wm. Henry is going to school and how little Samuel is getting on have the had plenty of pease and water mellons this summer. Water mellons is very plenty selling here in

in the town from fifty cents to one and one-half dollar each.  
Sonora may be half so large as Galena a good deal of French stores  
here. Lotts of Chinese keep on business here in town. There is  
people here I suppose from most all nations. Give my love to sister  
Mary and family and all enquiring friends.  
No more at present from your affectionate husband

John Smithram

(On back of same letter)

Sonora August 10th 1853

I received your letter today of date June 22nd. The answer of  
the second money I sent you.

Sonora August 25th 1853

Dear Wife

I this evening take the pleasure to write you this letter hoping it will find you in good health as it leaves me at present. I feel thankful to the Almighty for his goodness and many mercies towards us all. I have felt very well lately so well as I have any time since I have been in California. I still have a troublesome cough but not near so bad as when at home. I am still living and working at the same place as when I wrote last have six dollars per day and pay nine dollars per week for my board. Sameul Vincent and my self bought a cabin yesterday in Sonora town We are going to batch there next week. Samuel Vincent is from Dodgeville he work in the same claim with me. Our claim is looking very well at present. I may have a job there all summer untill the rain comes or I may be out in a week or two.

I now send you fifty dollars. I expect it will be acceptable. Let me know how you are getting on how your money is holding out. I will not stint you after my debts is paid. I received a letter last mail an answer to the last money I sent you and one the mail before. I was glad to know that you was all well. I am glad you had the children vaxinated. I hope they will do well. Let me know how the are all on every letter you send me. I shall be very glad when the time come for us all to meet again and if we do not meet on earth I hope we shall all meet in heaven. There was a large fire here in Sonora last week Thirty thousand dollars worth of property burnt. John Tregloan is still at Murphys. I believe he is very well. John and Rd. Goldsworthy is still at Woods I saw them last Sunday the are very well. Crissy and Dick Clemence is at Woodes the are very

well. Times is very dull here now many places that will do to work in the winter and spring is idle now for want of water. I have sent a letter every mail for the last four or five mails. Be sure to answer the letters that you receive money in so quick as you get the money changed. I have had answer from all the money I sent you. Let me know how the cows are getting along and the hogs dogs and chickens and what sort a garden you have. Wither the boys find father wanting to teel peas and water mellons and turnaps for them. I want them to be all good boys and when I comes home the shall have a lot of things and better knives than I sent them. Water mellons is very plenty here see wagons loads of them in Sonora any time price from two bits to one dollar and half each. I now conclude give my love to sister Mary and family and all enquiring friends. No more at present from your affectionate husband.

John Smithram

Sonora Sept 11th 1853

Dear Wife

I now take the priveledge to write you this letter hoping it will find you in good helth. I still feel very well and have ever since I have been living in Sonora. I fell very thankfull to the allmighty for his goodness and spareing mercies toward me. I sent you a letter and fifty dollars last mail which I hope you will receive before this come to hand. I am still working at the same place and have the same wages as when I wrote last. Two of us batch together cost about four or five dollars per week each. We have a little cabbin in the city of Sonora that we live in. The claim that I work in is poor and there is no certainty how long the will have any hands without it pays better. So I can't tell how soon I may be out of a job. Since I have been living in Sonora I have been hired six days and half about the neibourhood to fix pumps for which I have received twelve dollars per day. I do not expect much more of that work as the season is so far advanced and when the rain comes pumps are knocked idle times is very dull here now for want of water and are likely to be untill the rain comes. John Tregloan and John & Richard Goldsworthy is working at Viacoda I heard from them last week the are well I saw Tobias Richards the night before last and John Escock from Hazel Green the was then come from the northren mines Tobias told me that Mikel Morales is gone home and he think Wm. Hampey and Wm. Johns is gone home too. Tom, Edwards is here in our cabbin now he gives his love to his wife he is going to work tomorrow at a place called Dutch bar fourteen miles from here Crissy & Dick Clemence is still at Woodses. I received a letter from you the mail before last I expect one this mail. I send this picture for the boys to see how men looks in the different

grades of mining in this country. When the are making something the look much more chairfull than when the are making nothing. Allways when you write let me know what is the best news with all the boys and how fast the are learning their books. I suppose little Sameul have forgot me before now. I shall be fine and glad to see you all again which I hope to do some day. Let me know where Sam Bosando is and how he is getting on. I now conclude with my best respects and well wishes toward you all. No more at present from your affectionate husband.

John Smithram

Last Monday moarning Adam Stage was robbed of twenty five thousand dollars about one mile and half from Sonora when on its way to Stocton. Seven thousand five hundred dollars reward is offered for the recoverey of the money and the arest of the thieves.

Sept 28th 1853  
Centril Hill near Murphys Camp

Dear Wife

I again take the priveledge to write you these few lines. I am very well at present and hope these lines will find you all the same. I left Sonora 8 or 9 days ago. The claim that I worked on there was poor it would not pay to hire hands so I was out. I am now working at the place above mentioned fixing a pump. John Tregloan took the work to do so now I am working for him have six dollars per day have worked here six days shall finish here in 10 days or two weeks more. What I shall be at after that I cannot tell. We are four of us batch together John Tregloan, John Cambellack, John Thomas & my self. Tregloan is not here now while I am writing I think he is going to write this maill he is very well John & Rd. Goldsworthy is at Viaceda I believe the are very well Viaceda is 4 or 5 miles from here. It is six weeks now since I have received either letter from you. I am expecting one every mail. I intend to send home the money next mail to pay Robert. I expect I shall have about a nuff again that time to pay him. I sent 50 dollars to you the mail before last. I hope you have received it. Allways when you write let me know what is the best news with all the boys and what books the do reed in at school and who is learning the fastes. Tell them to be good boys and when I come home I will bring home some pretty things for them. You may let the field to Wa----- again on the same conditions or to any one else you must do by it as you think best. I want to know if anything is done by that road before our door. And who is elected as school officers. I want for you to try to send at Vinegar Hill this fall or spring for some currants trees. Edward Bates have lots of them home there of the very best kind. We are good friends

here. He says I shall have so much of them as I want he will write to his wife to let you have so much as you want of them. I think Rd. Thomas might bring home some of them for you. You can pay him for doing so. Bate lives close by Peter Oatey and as Richard Thomas is in the habit of going out there some times I think he would bring home some for you. I would like for you to get some of them anyhow. Bate is going home in the Spring with a good pile of money with him so he will not stop long at Vinegar Hill.

(Rest of letter missing)



Oct. 11th 1853  
Centril Hill near Murphys

Dear Wife

I again avail myself of the priveledge to write you this letter to let you know that I am well and hope these lines will find you the same. I feel thankfull to the almighty for his goodness and sparing mercies toward us all and if we never meet again on earth I hope we shall all meet in heaven. I se by your last letter that you had heard of your father's death and Mothers infirmities. I feel sorry for them but dont know that I can write anything that would give any consolation. I think a letter from yourself to your Mother would be very acceptable. I am still working at the place above mentioned. I sent you a letter last mail from this place two or three days more will finish the job I belong about now. I have agreed after I have finished this job to work for a man on the claim for five dollars per day. Direct my letters to Sonora as usuall. I dont know where I may be to again you receive this letter. I live and work with John Tregloan four of us batch together.

I was at Sonora yesterday and sent home four hundred and eighty dollars to Robert Frazer which is ten or eleven dollars more than I owed him. I expect when he get the money he will come up and pay the overplush. It will do for you to buy boots for the boys if the want them. I feel very glad to put this money in the office to send home tho it is all I have but if I continue to work for wages I shall pay Crissy what I owe him before you get this letter. You need not hurry about paying Henry Gray the Interest before I send money for you to do so. I think he will not hurry you for it. I was glad to see on the last letter that you was quite well again. I think sometimes how glad I should be to see you all again. I hope the boys will all be good

and then I will bring home some pritty things for them. I think you are best to buy a new ax for the boys to chop wood with a little one such as the can manage and have a handle for it from the store. And let them have a new dog chain and collar if the old chain is not strong enough. I want to know if any thing is done on that road before the door or not.

I mentioned on my last letter for you to try to get some currants trees from Vinegar Hill. Edward Bate a man that I use to work with at Jacksonflatts have a plenty of currants trees at Vinegarhill he tells me that I can have so much of them as I want by sending for them and as the are some of the best kind that is in the country I wish for you to get some. He will write to his wife to let you have so much as you want. I think Rd. Thomas would go out for them for you and set them down by the fence or someplace out of the way of the plough untill I do come home. If it do cost two or three dollars to get them home I wish for you to have them. I suppose little Samuel have forgot me before now. Praps William Henry have not. Is Jim so limp as he was. do Tom still look after the cows. How do John get on housekeeping. Do the boys go to green for the letters give my respects to all enquiring friends May God bless you all

No more at present from

Your affectionate husband

John Smithram

Central Hill

near Murphys Camp  
October 23rd., 1853

Dear Wife

I now take the pleasure to write you this letter hoping it will find you in good health as it leaves me at present for which I feel thankfull to the almighty for his goodness toward me. I am still working at the place above mentioned have five dollars per day. John Tregloan and John Combellack work on the same claim. I live with them the are very well. I sent you a letter last mail and sent a letter and four hundred and eighty dollars to Robert Frazer. I want you to write so soon as you have settled affairs with him to let me know if all is right. I sent you fifty dollars on the second of August last which I hope you will have received before this come to hand. I suppose I shall pay Crissy what I owe him in two or three weeks more. I saw John Goldsworthy last Sunday he was up here he and Rd work at Viaceda the are well. It cost us about five dollars a week to batch. hams and beef are worth 25 cents per pound Flour worth 12 dollars per hundred pounds potaties five dollars per hundred pounds Butter 45 cents per pound tea just the same price as it is home brown suggar 6 or 7 pounds for a dollar clothing is cheap for this country I bought a pants last week for two dollars a very good pants to work in. and a woolling shirt for two dollars so cheap as the one at home. I think now the same as I did when at home that women was very silly to send blue drillin shirts out here to their husbands and men must be actually green to take them since I have been moveing from place to place here I have found it a nuff to do to carry my blankets and a few other necessary things. have had to leave several little things behind because I could not carry

them. My red shirt and blue pants is wore out. My stockings is done we can buy stockings here for 50 cents per pair just the same as we get home 25 cents a pair my tick pants is thrown away I mentioned on my last letter for you to try to send to Vinegar Hill for some currants trees I saw Edwan Bate since. he said he would write to his wife to let you have so much as you want. I want to have a good many. I think Rd. Thomas will go out for them for you pay him his days work or what he charge for doing so I received a letter you last mail was glad to know that you was all well want to know more about old Tige the cows and pigs and everything elce am glad that Jim is leaving soon as to get out of the dog and cat class. I should think that John ought to be able to write me a letter very soon. I suppose Tom is a smart fellow now for driving out the cows and eating turnops. is William Henry brave and stout still. how do little Sam and the baby get on. I hope that you are all well. I have been tolorablely well this summer but still have a bad cough at times. I hope to meet you all again if not on earth I hope in heaven. I dont know where I shall be again you receive this letter. allways direct my letters to Sonora as useal. let me know where Sam Bosanco is give my respects to him give my respects to Mr. Gray Rd Thomas Chas. Oaty and all enquiring friends. John Tregloan is now writing at the same tabel with me. Let me know if anything is done by that road near our door or likely to be done with what have yo done by them logs that was outside the gate and the old bridge. I hope you have got your winters wood in before now I \_\_\_\_ to send you some more money after I have paid Crissy I hope you will be able to get on comfortable and if you want any money before I send it I suppose Robert or Henry Gray would let you have some. So I must conclude with my best respects and well wishes toward you all may God bless you all, No more at present from your affectionate husband

John Smithram

Central Hill near Murphys  
November 13th 1853

Dear Wife

I now take the opportunity to write you this letter hoping it will find you in good health as it leaves me at present. Thank God for it. I am still working at the places above mentioned have five dollars a day how long I shall be here I cannot tell the diggings is poor. I feel tolerably well still have a bad cough which is very disagreeable. We have not had but little rain yet the wet weather settled in last year before this time. We are expecting rain every day. I suppose that I have almost tired you by this time by sending so much letters to you. but I expect the boys are able to go to the postoffice for them by this time. I intend to send you fifty or sixty dollars next mail I don't know whether you want any or not. I should like for you to let me know how you are getting on. I sent you fifty dollars on the second of August last. have not received any answer from it yet I sent money to Robert the mail before last to pay him I have wrote to you every mail for several months past. it is not much for me to write a letter to you and I suppose you are glad to have them at any time. I know that I am glad to receive your letters but I have not had either one for 6 or 7 weeks. I should like to know how the crops in the field turned out and how you got on about the hay and what you have done with the cattle John Tregloan works on the same claim with me he is not here now while I am writing he is very well Rd. Goldsworthy stopped with us the night before last he and John is very well they are going to work at Carsons about ten miles from here. Crissy is at Wood's near Sonora always when you write let me know what is the best news with all the boys and whether Jim is out of the cat and dog class yet or not. I write several things here that I have wrote on the

other letters not knowing wither you have received them or not.  
There is a great talk here about a good deal of gold being  
discovered in Peru South America. Several parties have left here  
for the gold mines in Peru I think that I have received moast all  
the letters that you have sent me untill lately. but I should like  
for them who do direct your letters to be a little more carefull and  
try to spell my name right it would be a better chance for me to  
get them direct as below. I now conclude with my best respects  
and well wishes toward you and all enquiring friends.

No more at present  
from your affectionate  
husband John Smithram

Mr. John Smithram  
Sonora  
Tuolumne County